

## Inmate Fraud Alert

On occasion, some state prison inmates attempt to solicit funds or other services from pen pals or the general public through misrepresentation of the facts. Most commonly, an offender will write to a number of individuals and ask them to deposit money into their inmate account to pay for prison services that are already provided to offenders at no monetary charge, or the offender will ask for funds with the promise of a future together upon release. Some examples of recent schemes include:

1. Falsifying details concerning race, age, sex, weight, crime, sexual orientation, marital status, etc.
2. Falsifying sentence length or release dates with claims of being released “as soon as court costs have been paid”; or “when restitution has been made”; or “when Board of Probation and Parole fees are paid”; etc.
3. Making false promises, such as marriage, intent to live with, etc., upon release from prison;
4. Claiming a need for money to pay for school, medical costs, meals, religious practices or other materials; or
5. Claiming their life is in danger and they will be harmed if money is not immediately deposited into their account or the account of another inmate.

Before engaging in correspondence, calls, or sending money on behalf of an offender, we urge you to first verify basic information about that offender and to validate their potential need. Again, it is important to note that all basic costs of incarceration are met by the state, and the only funds an offender may legitimately wish to have would be spent to purchase snacks, stamps, writing materials or extra toiletries in the institution’s canteen. Missouri inmates are not required to pay for schooling, medical care or release.

Any time you have questions or concerns about an inmate you may send an e-mail inquiry to the Department by clicking on the “[contact us](#),” then “[offender inquiry](#)” link on this site. Please be sure to provide the inmates name and offender number. While some information may be restricted from release, a response providing general information about the offender or the Department’s operations will be made to your inquiry, usually within 24 business hours. In addition, you may obtain information about the Department’s rules and regulations by visiting the Department’s web site at [www.doc.mo.gov](http://www.doc.mo.gov) and clicking on the “[For Family and Friends](#)” link.